

Five Hundred Hens in America's First Egg Laying Contest

WILLIAMSTOWN, Conn., Jan. 13. Over at the Connecticut Agricultural College at Storrs, up among the eastern Connecticut hills, five hundred hens are laying eggs to the best of their ability. They are one of the bluest blood in all poultry aristocracy, gathered together from various parts of the world for the first egg laying contest ever held on the North American continent.

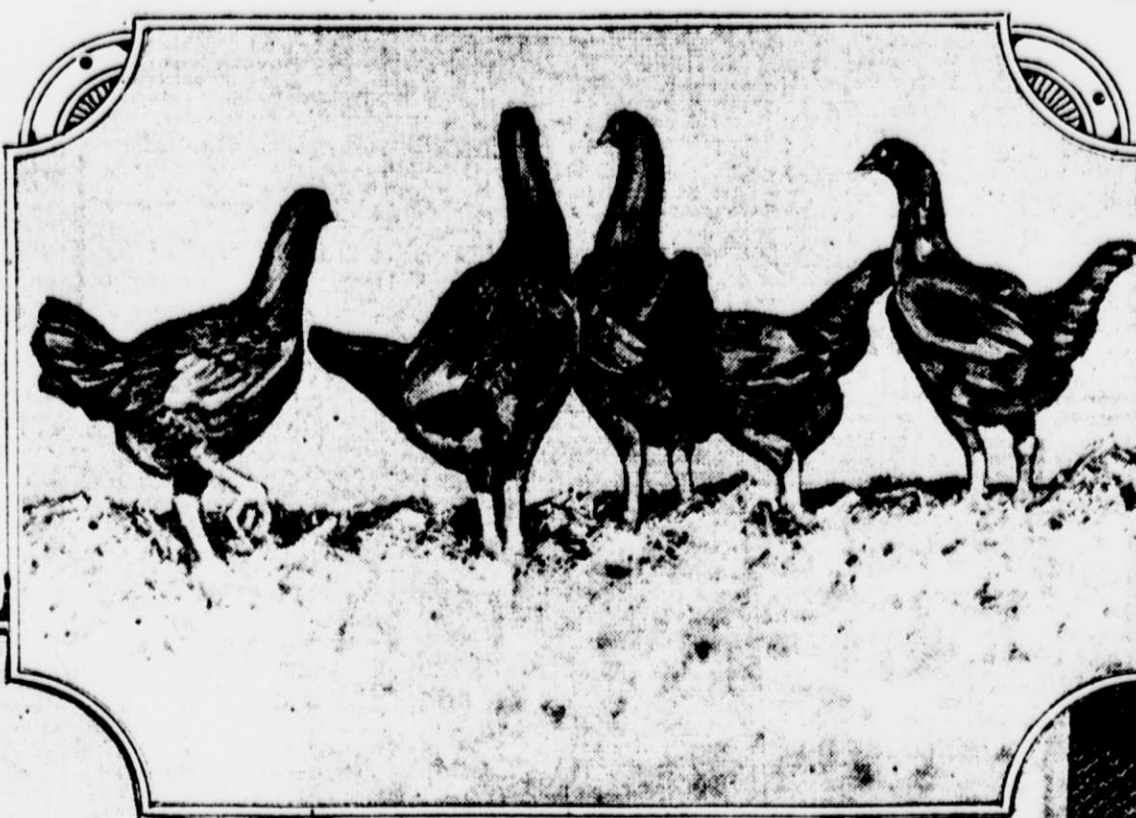
Australia started egg laying contests; the Utility Poultry clubs of England have had one or two and Germany has had one; it remained for the Connecticut college, the second institution to offer a course in poultry husbandry in this country, to have the first contest on the Eastern Hemisphere. Every breed recognized in the American poultry standard is represented among the competitors.

Hans Lobert, third baseman of the Philadelphia National League baseball team, enters a pen of white Plymouth Rocks from his English poultry farm. White Leghorns are entered in double numbers of any other breed, and the

York and New Jersey, but the Eastern poultry raisers are joined by their brethren from Michigan, where so many of the cold storage eggs are laid and stored, and from Kentucky and West Virginia and Illinois.

Canada has four entries altogether, one other besides that of the Trappist Fathers from Quebec Province and two from Ontario. White Leghorns, brown Leghorns, Rhode Island Reds and barred Plymouth Rocks show the catholicity of taste of the Canadian poultry raisers, not fanciers, since while many of the birds entered would do well in the show room each is entered here simply for its egg producing powers and not at all because it possesses any of the points which go to make up the breeder's ideal or any of the qualities best fitting it for the table.

Absolutely uniform conditions for every pullet entered mark the contest. They are housed in pens of five each in double houses across of egg production and they are each given six birds and one from



DARK CORNISH INDIAN GAMES.

yield of the 500,000 hens in this country is somewhere about seventy-five eggs a year for each hen. The hen which lays 120 eggs in twelve months is a mighty good hen. It pays its owner a profit. The hens kept for egg producing alone average nowhere near that. It is hoped they can be brought to average that and better by scientific methods based on the data furnished by this contest.

There is its human interest. Suppose the average of eggs to the hen were raised to 85 or 90 or even 100. As the average went up the price would go down, for the number of hens will increase with the population.

Then look at the financial side of it in distinction from the economic. If the average number of eggs was raised by one egg, that would mean a total of \$9,350,000 worth of eggs at 30 cents a dozen, below which fresh eggs do not fall these days. So that the prospect of determining how scientifically to compel the American hen to do her duty has tremendous possibilities.

The advisory board which has planned the contest and made the rules and regulations is and is now supervising it includes George A. McDevitt and F. V. L. Turner of the Philadelphia North American, Dr. A. A. Brigham of the South Dakota School of Agriculture, Prof. Homer Jackson of Pennsylvania State College and Prof. H. F. Stoneburn of the Connecticut Agricultural College, representing the science of poultry husbandry; Prof. Thomas F. McGraw of the International Correspondence Schools, Scranton, representing the poultry fanciers who raise thoroughbreds; Dr. Prince T. Woods, managing editor of the American Poultry Journal of Chicago, and Dr. Nathan W. Sanborn, editor of the American Poultry Advertiser of Syracuse, N. Y., who represent the poultry journals and the practical poultrymen; and Prof. F. C. Elford of McDonald College, who is the Canadian representative on the board.

With this board of directors settled upon the next problem was where to hold a contest of this importance and it was only after long consideration that the Connecticut college was chosen. The contest is not under the immediate direction of the college as such. Working with the college under State and Federal patronage is the Storrs Agricultural Experiment Station, on the staff of which Prof. Stoneburn is poultry husbandman, and the egg laying competition is under its management, with Prof. Stoneburn in charge.

Prof. Stoneburn was trained for the in-

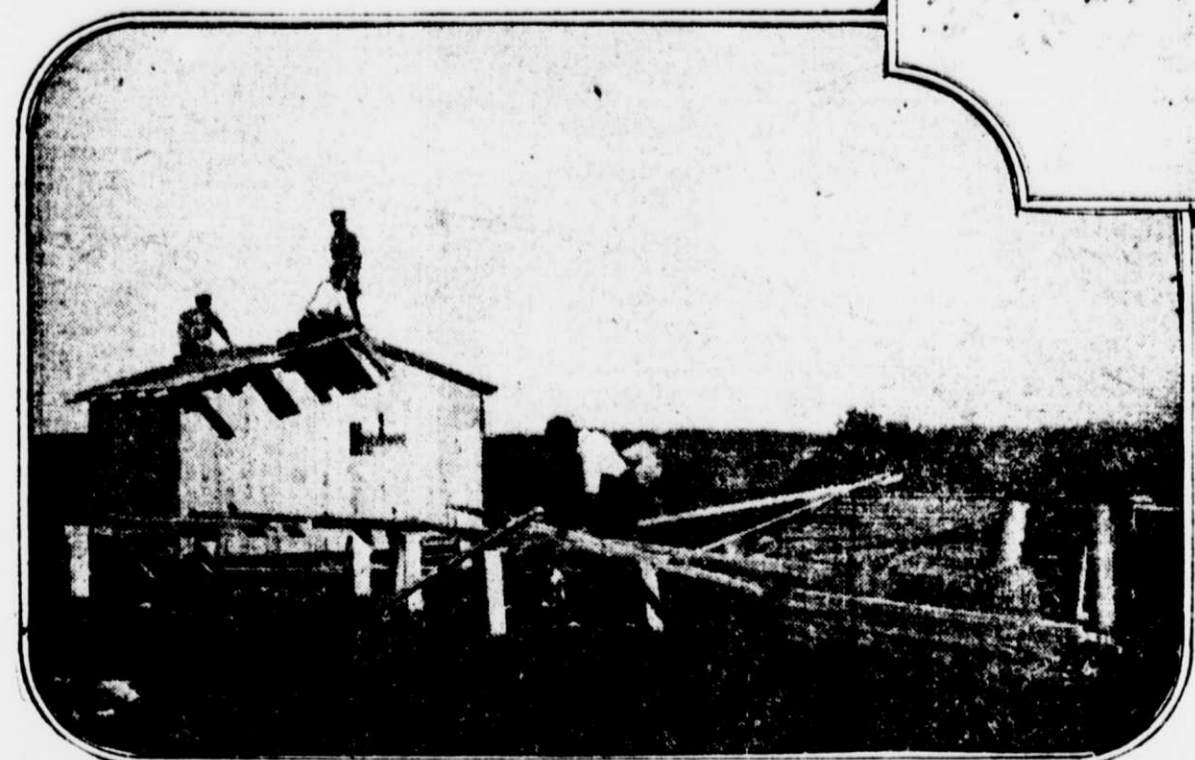
The houses are of wood 12 feet square and with a partition through the middle so as to accommodate each two pens of birds. A yard 20 by 50 feet, with 200 square feet of space for each pullet, is attached to each side. Enough of the front, sides and partition are of wire netting to permit perfect ventilation and easy access for sunshine all day long, and frames covered with cotton cloth can be let down to protect the hens from the elements while preserving good ventilation. Everything in them is movable and they are on skids.

Trap nests are used of Prof. Stoneburn's own model. They are of wood, as is all the construction, and when the hen goes in a trigger is sprung which locks the swinging front down so that she cannot get out until released. The attendants have a regular schedule of visits. When a hen has laid an egg the number on her leg band is read, and she is released. Then the attendant marks on the egg the bird's number and the pen number, the

test progresses and the incidental facts noted on the condition records about individual birds that Prof. Stoneburn and the experiment station expect to glean more of the data which will show the true egg type of hen as certainly as the dairy type of cow is known.

The hens are fed on the dry mash system, for the colleges have come to believe that the best. Several of the owners of contesting birds have retained at home pens of them as nearly identical as possible with those sent to Storrs and are trying different systems of feeding on them for the twelve months to see whether they may make discoveries, not.

In each house are water pans, cups of grit and of shell and for green feed a big beet is hung up. The grain is fed the pullets from an ingenious machine which drops kernels into the corn husk litter on the floor to be scratched for when a hen pecks at a wire net cylinder filled



CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE STUDENTS BUILDING A POULTRY PLAN.

runner up is the barred Plymouth Rock, and there are as well buff and brown ashpence, buff, white, Columbian, silver and golden Wyandottes, Rhode Island reds, white buff, Columbian and partridge Plymouth Rocks, white and buff Orpingtons, black Minorcas, Anconas, American Dominiques, black Langshans, Houdans, Cornish Indian games and buttermilk. This last breed is not recognized in the American standard, but these birds are thoroughbreds, as every bird entered must be, under the rules.

From a dozen or fifteen States, from Canada and from England the birds have come. Judges, physicians, institutions, men, women, amateurs and professionals like are represented. The Trappist monks have entered a pen of Rhode Island Reds from their agricultural institute in Quebec. Ellis Ames Ballard, who raises poultry near Philadelphia for the enjoyment of it, has in the pen of Houdans he is striking looking black and white fowl, with a crest like the football player's hair of a ten years ago.

The English entry was made by the Utility Poultry Clubs and the pen of white Leghorns comes from the Thomas Barron poultry farm at Catterth, England. The Sanatoria Poultry Yards at Swarthmore, Pa., and the Gaylord Farm Anti-Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Wallingford, Conn., are represented, one by white and the other by brown Leghorns. Connecticut is of course largely represented and so are Pennsylvania, New

each pen is kept in reserve elsewhere on the contest grounds. The fifty houses are identical in every particular and the houses are fed, watered and handled exactly alike and have the same two square feet apiece outside the houses to run in.

There are no roosters in the pens and the contest, which is to be one year in duration, is strictly a hen party. Authorities say that the sterile egg is by far the better egg for any purpose to which eggs are put. It tastes better, keeps longer and is more nutritious. Each hen is there to attend strictly to the business of egg production, and they appear to be carrying the weight of that responsibility well, some of them now and then lay two eggs a day to help out the average.

Yet what is the point of it all? The answer brings this egg laying contest right home to every family in the United States.

Strange as it may seem, there is no standard for egg producing poultry, and which breed or what age, size or physical conformation may be looked to for the best and the most eggs are questions which to-day, after all the generations, since the barnyard fowl first came out of Asia on its westward way, are a matter of guesswork. Men know these things about milk cattle and cattle raised for food, about pigs and sheep and goats; in the case of all utility animals and farm stock men know to which strain of blood and which physical characteristics to look for the results they desire.

All but poultry, the man who would produce more or better eggs has no scientific basis upon which to work. He may try some system or simply trust to luck, but he must go it blind, hit or miss.

"They talk of forcing the hen to lay," says Prof. Stoneburn of the Connecticut college. "I wish I knew how to do it, but I don't, for it can't be done!" Prof. Stoneburn was the first pupil of Dr. Brewer to go to teaching poultry husbandry and Dr. Brewer is the father of that study in this country.

This contest will furnish a wealth of data on which to base a standard. When it is over the poultryman will have facts to work on as to which breed is the best egg producer and what characteristics in the individual hen make for the best eggs and the most of them. Besides that, there will go out from this contest at the end of next October, and be distributed far and wide, 500 hens about which everything that can be known of any application to this subject of egg production is known, and from those of the highest egg producing type will be bred other generations of fowls with an efficiency in this line which in ten years should very materially increase the number of eggs laid in the United States and this should very materially decrease the cost to the consumer.

The ideal of the poultryman is 200 eggs a year from each hen. It is realized only in occasional cases. The actual average

business and had been in it for some time in Philadelphia and Newark when his eyes went back on him and he sought an out door life running a farm in northern New York. His strength and determination overbalanced his ignorance of farming and pulled him through.

Gradually it made its way into his consciousness that what paid him his profit was his poultry—he was a bookkeeper and his books showed this, so by degrees he became a poultryman; but he didn't know anything about poultry. He went to the Rhode Island State College to learn something about it from Dr. Brigham, who offered the first courses in it in this country. A long and severe illness taxed his resources and resulted in the sale of his interest in the New York State farm and he became Dr. Brigham's assistant, and finally in 1902 he took the chair of poultry husbandry at Storrs.

The scene of the egg laying contest on the crest of a sunny hillside facing the south is a sight really worth seeing. The entire plan is new and was provided for this affair. Fifty poultry houses of the most modern sort stand in four long rows inside a heavy eight foot wire fence, with gates at convenient points. Each row is fenced off from the others, and the same wire fencing is used for the yards in the rear of each house. At night three or four good sized and active dogs with inquisitive dispositions make it plain that marauders will find chicken stealing unprofitable.

latter with a rubber stamp and makes the proper record on the pen record sheet hanging on the wall.

This record sheet is renewed weekly and contains blanks for recording everything about the pen and its occupants.

The eggs go to the office of the contest, where loose leaf records tell all about them. Each egg is weighed and a weight recorded. A two ounce egg is the proper egg, and these are weighed in hundreds of a pound. Any egg weighing 12½ pounds is culled out, but there are few culls. Most dozens weigh 26 ounces. The eggs are put up in dozens in a patent carrier and crated and shipped to Philadelphia. The carriers are marked to show that these are international contest eggs. A firm there pays 45 cents a dozen for them through the year.

So that the contest will really not cost anybody anything. Indeed, there is provision in the rules for a pro rata distribution of any money remaining at its end among the owners of the hens. A State appropriation pays for the new plant, which the college and experiment station would have had to have anyway.

While these records will show much as to the different breeds and will give the owner facts upon which to work in breeding and otherwise when he shall have received his birds back, it is from the weekly weight records of the birds and the exhaustive series of physical measurements which are being taken as the con-

with grain and thus turns the rod to which it is attached.

It was in October that the birds began arriving at Storrs and the contest started on Wednesday, November 1. At present the English pen is well in the lead, it being no unusual thing for its white Leghorns to lay an egg a day apiece and keep it up for days at a time. These white Leghorns are of a different type from the United States standard. They seem smaller because their feathers lie sleekly on the body, but they are broad and chunky and probably weigh more than the apparently larger American bird.

Some of the pens have one or two and some have all of their birds moulting. The owners sent chicks hatched too early and come out of this and later lay eggs, but they will find it hard work to overcome the handicap.

There are prizes of every conceivable class and they will come in for something in the list. It includes cups for the leading pen as to number of eggs for the year and for the individual bird making the best record in this and class prizes in every breed and variety and for individuals in each. State prizes, monthly and quarterly prizes and special prizes for many things—the pen showing greatest net profit above cost of food and pen laying greatest number of eggs during moult and consolation prizes for losers, egg record being among them.

Paris Bank Messengers Armed Now

PARIS, Jan. 6.—This is the uniform by which any one in need of a few thousands of francs in cash and securities is supplied with a revolver, a speedy automobile and the requisite audacity may recognize the garcon de recette, or bank messenger, in Paris.



PARIS BANK MESSENGER ARMED WITH A REVOLVER.

These men pass through the town in every direction from early morning. Occasionally the bank messenger is accompanied by another man to act as his guard, but neither has been armed hitherto and in the latest attack on a bank messenger the guardian was only of use in running to give the alarm at the bank. The prefect of police has at last authorized the bank messengers to carry revolvers, but most of the men will cling in addition to their old form of defence—a pocketful of loose pepper to throw in the eyes of an assailant.

The uniform is declared by the bank authorities to be a necessity for purposes of identification in the men's work, which includes collecting bills and drafts and is greatly increased by the fact that checks are not yet in common use here.



BANK MESSENGER IN PARIS.

THE "CAMBRIDGE APOSTLES." Autos Collect Paris

Famous Club of Undergraduates at the English University.

When Tennyson was an undergraduate, there existed at Cambridge University a small but brilliant and influential literary club originally called the "Cambridge Conversation Society." Later certain detractors, because of the number of its members, playfully dubbed it the "Apostles Society," a name which it joyfully accepted and has retained ever since.

It was founded in 1829 for debate and discussion on literary and philosophical topics, says the "Harvard Advocate." The success which the members later achieved is striking. Of the well known names are those of Arthur Henry Hallam, to whose friendship with Tennyson we owe "In Memoriam"; Richard Moultou Millar, afterwards Lord Houghton, poet, society leader, and brilliant member of Parliament; Trench, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin; Merivale the historian; Charles Butler, who became one of the leaders in the House of Commons; and a colleague of John Stuart Mill in the Utilitarian movement, Frederick Denison Maurice, and John Sterling, whose memory has been perpetuated in Carlyle's biography.

The Apostles usually met on Saturday night in the rooms of one of their number. The host read a political, literary, or philosophical paper, after which he was subjected to a storm of questions and criticisms. Refreshments, usually of coffee and anchovies on toast, were provided, which sustained the company till the small hours of the morning.

An old Apostle wrote that the picture which he carried away of Tennyson at one of these gatherings was of one "sitting in front of the fire, smoking and meditating, and now and then mingling in the conversation." At these meetings Tennyson read most of the poems that were published in his 1829 and 1832 volumes.

After the poems were read they were laboriously written out by each one who wished to have his own copy. The influence of Tennyson in the university and the respect in which he was held are shown by the debate held in the Cambridge Union while he was still an undergraduate—"Tennyson or Milton, which the greater poet?"

The enthusiasm of the Apostles for practical causes, their power of test-

ing the ideals which they evolved in the intellectual rivalry of the Society, is seen in the so-called Spanish Expedition. In the long vacation of 1831, Tennyson, Hallam, Kenble and other Apostles went to Spain with money and supplies for the insurgent allies of General Torrijos, a leader in a revolt against the tyranny of Ferdinand VII.

Although they came safely home after some weeks, the danger of the affair was shown when, two years later, Robert Boyce, a cousin of John Sterling's, was captured with General Torrijos and some fifty Spaniards, and suffered military execution at Madrid.

The continuation of the friendship formed at Cambridge is seen in the Sterling Club, organized by some old Apostles, which numbered among its members, beside Tennyson and Milnes and others of their set, Edward Fitzgerald, Thackeray, Carlyle, John Stuart Mill and Sir Francis Palgrave.

ILLINOIS CENTRAL PENSIONS.

Names of Men Who Had Served More Than 50 Years on the List.

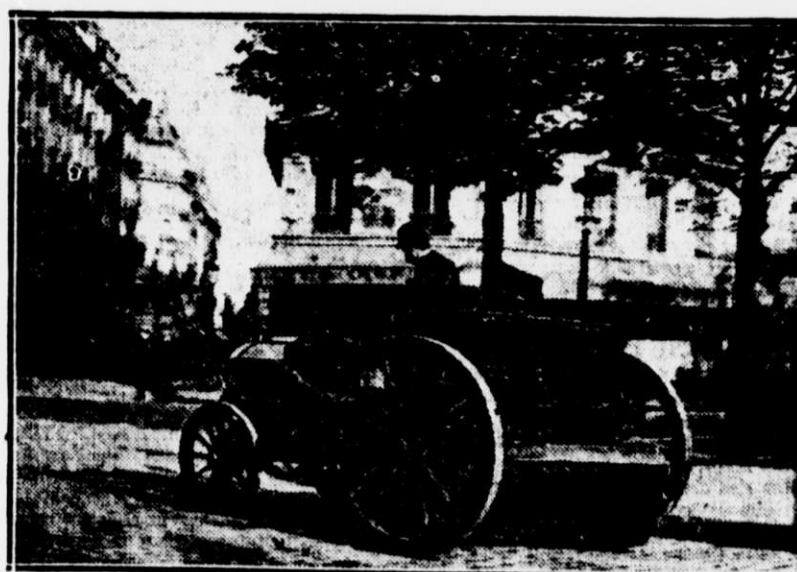
(From the "Railway Age Gazette.") Figures compiled by the pension department of the Illinois Central show that during the period of 10 years—July 1, 1901, to June 30, 1911—534 employees were pensioned, exclusive of a number of men to whom special allowances were granted in lieu of pensions on account of their not being technically eligible to pension under the rules. The names of 364 men were on the pension roll on June 30, and the pension roll as of that date was at the rate of \$95,429 per year. During the 10 years' operation the company paid out \$111,684 in pensions, not including special allowances.

An examination of the pension records show many interesting features. An agent at a comparatively small station, 53 years continuously in the service in the same capacity, receives a pension of \$47.57 a month for the rest of his life. A thimble, 53 years continuously in the service, receives \$40.32. A laborer, 52 years continuously in the service and whose wages were always necessarily below the wages of men of skilled trades, receives a pension of \$32.08. An engine man is receiving a pension of \$80.12 a month; another engine man has been paid \$5,322.50 during the 10 years he has been carried on the pension roll. The figures do not include the Yazoo & Mississippi Valley.

Rubbish and Sweep the Streets

PARIS, Jan. 6. Paris is experimenting with automobile carts for removing household rubbish and garbage. The automobile combined sweeper and watering car has proved a great success owing to the rapidity with which it cleans the streets. The one in the photograph was on its way to the Brussels exhibition, hence the derby hat worn by the driver.

Automobile vans for postal service have been in use in Paris for some years and their drivers have earned a reputation for recklessness that has made them celebrated even in a city where all drivers expect people on foot to look after their own safety. The new type of postal van is speedy and silent, painted in a dark green with yellow wheels, a striking contrast to the ugly, noisy vehicle it has replaced.



THE NEW AUTOMOBILE ROAD SWEEPER AND WATERER.



AUTOMOBILE CART FOR REMOVING HOUSEHOLD REFUSE, WITH ONE OF THE COVER DIVISIONS OPENED.